

NATIONAL EPA-TRIBAL SCIENCE COUNCIL

Conference Call Summary Monday, January 23, 2012 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

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Roll Call/Introductions

Monica Rodia, Executive Secretary of the National EPA-Tribal Science Council (TSC), welcomed the members to the teleconference and took roll. She and Ted Coopwood introduced James Luedecke, who is the new Region 6 Tribal representative replacing Curtis Munoz. James shared that his master's degree is in civil engineering and he is a member of the Cherokee Nation. He has worked for the Quapaw Tribe for 4 years.

December Business Meeting Minutes

Monica reported that the December face-to-face meeting minutes have been reviewed finalized and distributed to the TSC members and are now part of the official records. The presentations will be posted on the TSC's website, and Monica will send the web address to the TSC members as soon as the presentations are posted.

Tulsa Meeting Report Out

Ted reported that conducting a joint face-to-face meeting with the National Tribal Caucus (NTC) was a unique opportunity that could help each organization advance its mission. The meeting also afforded the opportunity for Joel Scheraga to present about EPA's tribal consultation plan for the Agency's climate change adaptation strategy; the presentation was well-received and explained what the Agency is attempting to accomplish and how important tribal and TSC involvement is to the process. Another important aspect of the meeting was Jeff Mears' presentation about the Oneida Tribe's implementation efforts regarding climate change and how climate change adaptation and implementation can be integrated into tribal operations. The Oneida Tribe has introduced practical steps to implementation, and this example can be helpful for TSC and EPA to foster implementation among the tribes. Another significant aspect of the meeting was the opportunity to work with the NTC, which supports the TSC and recognizes its efforts in identifying national level tribal priorities. An outcome of the meeting was a clear path forward in terms of how the TSC and NTC can work together to realize the implementation of the two National Tribal Science Priorities (TSPs). Ted recognized Ken Bailey, Joe Schubauer-Berigan and Allison Martin for their work on the Tribal-FERST training session and panel discussion.

John Mosley added it was an interesting meeting and the discussion topics (e.g., climate change) were relevant and of concern to all of the Region 9 tribes. Beth Jackson thought that it was one of the most productive meetings of the TSC in terms of the discussions and the formulation of next steps. Bear Carrillo agreed that it was a productive meeting in terms of the number of voices involved and the input from NTC.

Ted asked what improvements could be made for future face-to-face meetings. Bear thought that perhaps meeting days that involve field trips could be logistically improved so that the day is not so long. Patti Tyler thought that the Caucus time could be better utilized (e.g., by including treaty training), allowing the EPA Caucus to be more proactive. Monica asked whether the recent Region 8 training on working with tribal governments was tailored to Region 8 or whether it was the standard training available on the American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO) portal. Patti replied that the 1-day training had been tailored to Region 8 and included presentations from members of the Cheyenne Tribe and presentations about issues and activities relevant to Region 8. It was very worthwhile training provided by the Region 8 Tribal Assistance Program Manager and staff. Beth added that Stanley Holder or Brenda Groskinsky might be able to discuss how Region 7 had updated its tribal training; Brenda had offered to determine how it could be included in an EPA Caucus. Brenda reiterated that the focus of the training was on environmental policy in Indian Country, which had been added to the standard tribal government training. Perhaps a subgroup of the EPA Caucus could prepare a similar training for the EPA Caucus during the

next face-to-face meeting. Tia thought that similar training could be organized if the next meeting was held in Las Vegas, Nevada. Monica said that cost estimates had been completed, and the locations would be discussed during the February TSC teleconference.

Discussion of Current TSC Focus Areas

Ted reported that he and Monica are working with AIEO to determine the best possible strategy for EPA to help the tribes implement the TSPs in Indian Country. Administrator Lisa Jackson would like the TSPs to be included in the Agency's budget process. Implementation must be strategic and focus on how EPA can accomplish things to help in the community, especially given the current financial climate. The TSC must continue to work on understanding what implementation will look like in a tribal community so that the Agency can determine how it can help. Ted highlighted a number of opportunities in which the TSC can be involved. The first is to provide input into EPA's climate change adaptation strategy. Joel has indicated that the role of TSC can be to disseminate information and work with tribes in the best manner possible. There also is an opportunity to work with the EPA "Green Book" initiative on sustainability. The TSC has been asked to help with this effort that will include listening sessions with tribes all over the country to determine what sustainability means to the tribes. Finally, there is the opportunity to work with the NTC on its climate change adaptation strategy. The goal is to assign one EPA and one or two tribal representatives to work with Clay Bravo and his group. EPA has a great deal to learn from the tribes about traditional ecological knowledge. Monica added that shortly after the meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma, they had met with Joel and Gerald Filbin in the Office of Policy (OP) to identify a role for the TSC in the consultation process and keep the momentum moving forward. AIEO expects that the TSC representatives on NTC's climate change workgroup will take the lead in addressing climate change priorities as they relate to adaptation (i.e., the TSC will address its TSP via the workgroup). It is important to be "at the table" to work with the NTC in addressing priorities. The TSC will have direct input and can include the specific needs identified by the tribes via the TSP templates. The TSC is well-positioned to address adaptation needs for climate change. Ted added that it is important for the EPA and Tribal Caucuses to be in sync.

David Guest reiterated that the Agency is developing a climate change adaptation strategy, and the regions and program offices will be developing specific strategies as well. The announcement of tribal consultation is expected to occur soon. The establishment of an EPA workgroup on climate change is to share information more effectively between the Agency and the tribes. EPA is doing the best it can to consult and work with the tribes in an ongoing process. David is working with Clay to set up the initial teleconference with interested NTC, TSC and EPA members. A few calls will be needed to scope out the group's specific objectives. Personally, he has been trying to establish connections with the tribal offices within other federal agencies that are working on climate change (e.g., National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Geological Survey [USGS], Bureau of Indian Affairs). The workgroup could determine what sort of interactions it can have with other federal agencies in terms of climate change in Indian Country and Alaska Native Villages. Information will be shared with all of the TSC members. TSC members interested in joining the workgroup should contact Monica by close of business (COB) on Wednesday, January 25, 2012. Monica will provide the names to David by the end of the week.

Tia asked whether the Agency's climate change adaptation plan had been released. David said that the draft plan has not been released because some tribes have indicated that they would like to provide input before the draft plan is finalized and released. Tia asked how the tribes could provide input. David responded that the plan is to announce the consultation period, the beginning of which will involve tribal input before the draft plan is finalized and released. Next, the finalized draft will be released to the tribes, and the tribal consultation period will commence. Finally, the public comment period will commence. Tia asked how the tribes could provide the initial input. David explained that a notification letter will be sent to all federally recognized tribes, which Monica can provide to the TSC members when it is available,

and regionally focused webinars will be held that explain the purpose of the adaptation plan. Input can be provided via the webinars or in writing. EPA's OP will be able to provide the final details about the specific logistics of the consultation process.

Allison thanked the members for a productive face-to-face meeting and the feedback that they had provided about Tribal-FERST. Team members are working to implement changes based on the feedback, and additional team members in Las Vegas, Nevada, are developing the science and modeling for climate change. A few team members are looking for fish consumption data from tribal studies. She will be following up with the TSC members on an individual basis to determine whether any of the members have information on relevant tribal fish tissue or consumption studies, or if they know of a database or a compilation of such studies or reports. Lon Kissinger said that he had summary statistics available for tribes in his region. Dan Kusnierz said that his tribe had past data used for developing its consumption advisories available. Currently, the tribe is working on a study under the Regional Applied Research Effort program and needs to analyze and interpret data in terms of fish consumption. Denise Jensen also has relevant data for her tribe. Bob Hall said that tribes in his region had performed relevant work with the Bureau of Reclamation and USGS. Jon reported that his tribe has approximately 5 years' worth of relevant data. Ken explained that if the data can be geospatially referenced (e.g., latitude, longitude), it will make Tribal-FERST more accurate. Kathy Mayo said that the water quality standards program has compiled national tribal fish consumption rates, which also provides context for individual tribes.

Well-Being Assessment for Tribal Communities

Lisa Smith explained that she and other EPA staff members have been working to develop a national-scale human well-being index for the Sustainable and Healthy Communities Research Program. The goal is to identify changes in well-being in response to changes in services, including those from ecosystems, economy, social sectors and so forth. The researchers have identified eight domains that further identify indicators, which will help to develop the index. The goal was to develop the index on a national scale with the ability to scale it to the regional, state and community levels. The researchers have been tasked with developing a tribal index. A questionnaire was used to obtain feedback on important values from the general public and professionals; the questionnaire now is available to the tribes to help develop a tribal well-being index. The intent is, if possible, to work with one or two tribes to further refine the index. She reported that some TSC members already have completed the questionnaire. Katie Renwick explained that the questionnaire is self-explanatory; it took her approximately 20 to 25 minutes to compare the various domains. Lisa said that it was not necessary to complete the entire questionnaire; the goal is to obtain information at the domain level at least.

David said that the Arctic Council had discussed creating a resiliency study of five or six indigenous communities; he could communicate with Lisa about this effort. Monica asked about the deadline to complete the questionnaire - Lisa would like baseline information collected by the end of February 2012, but information can continue to be gathered after that point as well. Dan asked whether the questionnaire was designed to be completed by individuals or whether several individuals should develop a community response. Lisa responded that individual responses were desired. She urged any of the TSC members who had questions to contact her or Kevin Summers. Monica thanked Lisa for presenting the information to the TSC during the face-to-face meeting and the teleconference.

Identifying the Top Five Documents That Explain How Climate Change Is Impacting Tribal Water Resources

Felicia Wright explained that the Office of Water (OW) is creating a website featuring water and climate change, including how climate change is changing the assumptions about water resources. One of the five

pieces of the strategy highlighted on the website is about working with the tribes. OW would like to determine which tribal climate change information that is closely related to water would be the most useful to include on the website. The website is intended to provide answers to the following questions: What is EPA doing in terms of climate change and tribal water resources? Who are the partners? OW would like TSC and tribal input regarding the most useful information and also would like to provide a website link to the TSC's website and its efforts on the climate change TSP. If the TSC members have ideas regarding tribal activities/projects or other information that should be featured, they should contact Felicia. Another option is to include a 2- to 3-minute video interview with a tribal member who would like to talk about climate change and its relation to water. Monica asked whether any of the TSC members had information that they could suggest. Kathy explained that Region 5 tribes had identified several climate change concerns related to water, including water temperature change and how it will affect the cold-water fish species on which they rely. Another concern was changes in water quantity and flow and how they might affect an important plant species (wild rice). She can look at her notes and provide additional ideas to Felicia. Felicia reported that the National Tribal Air Association and other tribal organizations have released relevant papers, and these are the types of documents that OW would like to highlight, particularly those with water quality and quantity focus. Tia asked about the deadline to provide information. Felicia said that the goal was to publish the website by the end of the month, but documents could continue to be added in the future. Members with information regarding climate change and water issues should provide ideas to Monica as soon as possible. Felicia encouraged those who would like to be interviewed to contact Monica.

Announcements

Tia announced that her region's workgroup devoted to tribal science had worked with Ken and Valerie Zartarian to provide hands-on Tribal-FERST training during the Region 9 Regional Tribal Operations Committee (RTOC) meeting. The RTOC and Region 9 tribes are looking forward to receiving hands-on experience with the tool during the meeting. A climate change component will be included in the Tribal-FERST conversation. In response to a question from Monica, Tia explained that there would be a call-in number for external participation. EPA Region 9 personnel also will participate. Monica will follow up with Tia to obtain the call-in number.

Monica announced that the February teleconference will be held on February 27, 2012, from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. because of the Presidents' Day holiday. She encouraged the members to actively pursue the topics discussed during the teleconference.

Monica thanked the members for participating and adjourned the conference call at 3:25 p.m.

Action Items

- ✧ Monica will send the web address link to the December 2011 Business Meeting presentations and summary to the TSC members as soon as they are posted in early February.
- ✧ TSC members interested in joining the NTC workgroup devoted to climate change adaptation should contact Monica by COB on Wednesday, January 25, 2012. Monica will provide the names to David by the end of the week.
- ✧ Allison will follow up with TSC members regarding relevant tribal fish consumption study data that can be included in Tribal-FERST.
- ✧ Tribal representatives who are interested should complete the tribal well-being index questionnaire at <http://edu.surveymoz.com/s3/738771/Well-being-Pairwise-Assessment> (password: TWBI).

- ✧ TSC members with: (1) information on climate change and water issues or (2) an interest in participating in a short interview featuring a tribal project from a climate change water perspective for EPA's OW website should provide ideas as soon as possible to Felicia via e-mail and copy Monica.
- ✧ Monica will follow up with Tia to obtain the call-in number for the Region 9 RTOC meeting Tribal-FERST training session.

**NATIONAL EPA-TRIBAL SCIENCE COUNCIL
CONFERENCE CALL
JANUARY 23, 2012
2:00 PM - 3:30 P.M. EASTERN STANDARD TIME**

Call-in Number: **866-299-3188**
Access Code: **2025648322#**

FINAL AGENDA

- 2:00 – 2:05 Roll Call
- 2:05 – 2:10 December business meeting minutes distributed for review and finalized
- 2:10 – 2:30 Tulsa Report Out
 ○ EPA Caucus—Ted Coopwood
- 2:30 – 3:00 Discussion of Current TSC Focus Areas:
 ○ National TSPs and Implementation Process
 ○ EPA’s Climate Change Adaptation Plan (update on strategy and proposed timeline)
 ○ NTC Climate Change Adaptation Workgroup (David Guest, AIEO)
 ○ *Sustainability and the U.S. EPA* (Green Book) Tribal Listening Session
 ○ National Fish, Wildlife and Plant Climate Adaptation Strategy—TSC role in outreach to enhance opportunities for tribal participation and input (Jeff Mears, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin)
- 3:00 – 3:15 Well-Being Assessment for Tribal Communities (Lisa Smith, ORD)
 ○ Questionnaire link: <http://edu.surveymoz.com/s3/738771/Well-being-Pairwise-Assessment>
 ○ Password: TWBI
- 3:15 – 3:25 Identifying the Top Five Documents That Explain How Climate Change Is Impacting Tribal Water Resources (Felicia Wright, OW)
- 3:25 – 3:30 Announcement(s):
 ○ Region 9 RTOC Meeting in Chandler, Arizona, hosted by the Gila River Indian Community is scheduled for February 7–9, 2012. A Tribal-FERST Hands-On Demonstration and Experimentation Session has been confirmed for February 8, 2012.

Next conference call: *February 27, 2012, 2:00 – 3:00 pm EST*